/366 cont./

[796 562 889 932]

In this case the alferez was an old woman, wrinkled and respectable. /367/ assisted by her son, a young boy 18 to 20 years old who was a deaf-mute. She led the procession dressed in her most beautiful attire with flowers stuck in her hair.

The procession returned to the chapel to kneel and to perfume again the altar, on which a spot of still fresh blood stood out. The procession broke up shortly afterward, but part of those present accompanied the alfereza and her son, who proceeded with one of the banners from the church up to the door of their hut. There the standard, which the alfereza and her son kissed respectfully, was rolled up and attached to a stake of Cereus.

[816]

The authorities of the year seated themselves behind a table, and a mantle (talu) was spread out on the ground a certain distance away, on the edge of which the alfereza and her daughter-in-law squatted. They were promptly surrounded by a large number of women who grouped themselves in a horseshoe. A small tablecloth covered with coca leaves was placed on the table, as on the talu.

The alfereza and her son began to pray on their knees before the banner and offered up a libation of alcohol to it; then the young man went to get his wife and repeated the same ceremony with her (Pl. XII. A /see p. 132/). The alcaldes congratulated the alfereza, repeating the sacred formula of suma hora. This rite of politeness accomplished, they went to kiss the post against which the standard had been fastened, and then, taking two wooden cups with two bulls carved on the inside from the table, they offered up a libation of chicha accompanied by a prayer (Pl. XVII. A /see p. 138/).

[815 2078]

On the two sides of the talu behind which the women were seated a very old footless wooden cup, very old, had been placed, from which the women one after the other drank chicha (Pl. XVII. D).

The audience began to chew and to offer up libations. Prayers crossed each other, and in this exchange of vows and